

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Records Management

Part 282 Records Operations

Chapter 3 Congressional and Other Global Requests for Documents and Records

282 FW 3

3.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter describes the Fish and Wildlife Service policy and procedures for responding to Congressional and other agency requests that involve a Servicewide (global) search for documents and records.

3.2 What is the scope of this chapter? This chapter applies to requests from Congress and other agencies involving global searches for documents and records. It does not apply to routine inquiries, such as requests for general information, a Service report, or other publicly distributed material.

3.3 What are the authorities for this chapter? The authority for this chapter is Article 1, the Constitution of the United States of America.

3.4 Who is responsible for responses to Congressional and other global requests for documents and records?

A. The Congressional Document Management Unit (CDMU), Executive Secretariat:

(1) Coordinates Congressional or other requests requiring a global search for documents and records with Department of the Interior (DOI) bureaus and the Office of the Solicitor (OS).

(2) For each search, prepares and sends a transmittal memorandum with specific instructions on how to submit documents, records, and certification forms to the affected bureau(s).

B. The Assistant Director – Budget, Planning and Human Resources (AD–BPHR) is our Senior Contact for all matters related to Congressional or other global requests. The AD–BPHR:

(1) Ensures that all employees who may have potentially responsive documents receive a copy of the transmittal memorandum with attachments and get instructions about how to respond.

(2) Certifies that the offices, Regions, or California/Nevada Operations Office (CNO) with employees who may have potentially responsive documents and records completed the search (see section 3.6C for more information).

C. Assistant Directors (AD); the Chief, Office of Law Enforcement (OLE); Regional Directors (RD); and the CNO Manager ensure that employees search all applicable files and offices for relevant documents and records.

D. The Chief, Division of Policy and Directives Management (PDM) designates a PDM technical contact to:

(1) Disseminate the request with instructions and certification forms to employees who may have potentially responsive documents and records.

(2) Set internal due dates to allow time for adequate review and certification.

(3) Coordinate collection of documents, records, and certification forms to ensure we meet response due dates.

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282 FW 3

3.5 What is the general procedure for a Congressional or other global search request?

A. CDMU sends requests to the AD–BPHR, who sends them to the Chief, PDM.

B. The Chief, PDM, gives the request to the PDM technical contact, who distributes it to the offices/Regions/CNO that may have relevant documents and records. PDM sends the requests via facsimile or express mail. The request package includes the following information:

(1) Specific instructions for submission of documents.

(2) Blank Office Supervisor and Staff certification forms (see section 3.6).

C. Staff members:

(1) Perform searches.

(2) Copy relevant documents and records, organize them according to the instructions, and send them to the contact identified in the instructions by the established due date. (Each search may have different requirements for where to send the documents and records and how to organize them.)

(3) Complete and sign the staff certification form and give it to their supervisors.

D. Supervisors:

(1) Review the instructions their staff members receive to ensure they understand the requirements and to set internal milestones to meet response dates.

(2) Assign personnel, if necessary, to assist with search tasks.

(3) Collect and review the staff certification forms to ensure they are complete.

(4) Complete the supervisor certification form and send it and the staff certification forms to the contact identified in the instructions.

3.6 What is a certification form? Certification forms confirm that the employees identified performed a complete search and included all documents and records found in his or her response. There are three types of certification forms:

A. Staff Certification Form (see Exhibit 1). This form certifies that the employee identified performed a good faith search and included all the documents and records he or she found. The employee also records information about the number of hours spent on the task, their labor rate, and other costs (see section 3.8 for more information about costs).

B. Supervisor Certification Form (see Exhibit 2). By signing this form, the supervisor certifies that he or she reviewed the instructions and completed the necessary steps to ensure that the search was comprehensive, including searching his/her own documents and records. The form also includes a table for the supervisor to record hours spent, the hourly rate for all the employees who worked on the search, and other costs.

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RECORDS MANAGEMENT**

Records Management

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282 FW 3

C. Senior Contact Certification Form. The AD-BPHR certifies to CDMU that the Service performed a good faith search and that we have provided all responsive documents and records found. This form also lists all costs that supervisors and staff submit.

3.7 Why is it important for Service employees to meet the due dates assigned for response?

A. Employees must meet the established due date to allow time to consolidate and index the documents and records. CDMU needs adequate time to coordinate review of the documents and records with the Office of the Solicitor for Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Privacy Act considerations.

B. If you cannot meet a due date, contact the Chief, PDM as soon as possible and explain why. PDM will ask the Executive Secretariat for an extension.

3.8 How does the Service account for the costs of preparing responses? All employees responding record their time and associated costs on their staff certification forms. The supervisor totals all the amounts from employees and records them on the supervisor certification form. The total can include, but is not limited to, costs for staff time, reproduction of documents, and express mail. The guidelines below explain how to calculate the costs:

A. Staff Time. For each staff member involved in processing a request, include the grade level, number of hours, and total cost (hours worked × estimated hourly rate). Include this information for each staff member involved in searching for, indexing, and copying documents.

B. Reproduction of Documents. Include the number of pages reproduced and the total cost. To calculate the cost of photocopying, use the standard, current fee for reproducing FOIA documents. If you use a vendor, provide the actual cost.

C. Express Mail. Include the total Regional/CNO/office cost for express mail for the response. Include express mail from field stations to the Regional/CNO office as well as express mail from the Regional/CNO office to the Washington Office.


**Deputy
DIRECTOR**

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Supersedes Director's Order 102, 08/14/98

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